

THE
AMERICAN
SUNDAY SCHOOL MAGAZINE.

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MISCELLANY.

AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

ADDRESS OF THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.

THE Committee of Publication of the American Sunday School Union consider it a duty they owe to the society of which they are the agents; to the authors whose works they republish, and to the public as the readers of these works, to avow fully and explicitly their mode of treating the subject committed to their charge. While the committee feel the immense responsibility which they assume, in becoming dictators to the consciences of thousands of immortal beings, on the great and all-important subject of the welfare of their souls; while they dread the consequences of uttering forgeries, or giving their sanction to misrepresentations of the glorious truths of the gospel, they are not backward to become the responsible arbiters in these high points, rather than tamely issue sentiments which, in their consciences, they believe to be false, or inconsistent with the purity of divine truth, however highly recommended by the names of illustrious saints, or the sanction of the most evangelical and benevolent societies. Praying to be directed into all requisite truth by the unerring spirit of infinite wisdom, they commit the works issuing from the press of the American Sunday School Union freely to the public sentiment, soliciting the prayers of all the friends of Sunday schools, and inviting their aid in the performance of this duty.

VOL. I.—N

With these few introductory remarks the committee beg leave once for all to advise the authors of those works which they are happy to adopt and to circulate, and also to inform their readers that the utmost liberty is used with regard to whatever is republished by them, not only in *localizing* the admirable works written in England and elsewhere abroad, in order to accord with the idiom and sentiments of our population, but in the language and even the ideas, modifying expressions, and, where circumstances require it, directly opposing the opinions of the original writers, considering all that class of works, suitable for Sunday schools, as the common property of the Christian public, which they may adapt to their own purposes. And however rash this course may at first sight appear, yet, in experience, the committee find no middle path between the entire adoption of works unfitted to the intellects and habits of their readers, and corrupted with gross errors; and the exercise of this general and arbitrary power of revising, correcting, and amending every work that is republished by them. In the former case they could not avoid frequently violating their consciences, while in the latter they may often by a single correction present to their readers a delight which some flaw had otherwise rendered totally inadmissible.

In the discharge of this critical service, it would be presumption to expect the *entire* approbation even of all the friends of Sunday Schools; yet the committee indulge the hope that the favourable sentiments of their constituents may be obtained, and that their labours will be so far approved by all, that none would fear to commit to the hands of children works published only after a careful and scrupulous examination, by a body who can have no other object in view than the prosperity of Sunday Schools and the promotion of early and pious education. If errors and oversights meet the eye of nicer observers, let us be judged in charity and in the spirit of meekness. The committee trust that the friends of Christ will, rather than condemn them, uphold their hands in the mighty conflict, and present them in prayer to Him who can give light and wisdom, and who is able, in the moral as well as in the natural world, to cause that which is sown in weakness to be raised in power.

In the selection of works for publication, the committee have chiefly in view the one grand object of *Gospel truth*, and their desire is to furnish such as present these glorious truths in the most

palpable and most interesting form, believing that these, and these alone, can rescue man from the darkness and miseries of this world, as well as from the horrors of the world to come, and that the early inculcation of these will best promote his happiness on earth and his glory in heaven.

The committee will add this much more of themselves for the information of the public. They are annually chosen by the Directors of the American Sunday School Union, a board, embracing in its numbers a representation of all the principal classes of Christians; they are five in number, and composed of various denominations; their meetings are held at the Depository on two evenings of every week; they act without any reward but the privilege of serving an humble part in the cause of the best of masters, and without interest, save what it may be their happiness to possess in his glorious kingdom.

PHILADELPHIA ASSOCIATION OF MALE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

The association held its meetings on the third Mondays in August and September, and were well attended. The conductors of schools in the city and county who can make it convenient to attend, will certainly confer a benefit on the cause, and most probably every one would receive some useful hints to aid him in his Sunday School labours. For our own parts, we consider these familiar meetings for discussion and conversation on matters affecting our Sunday employments, as of the greatest importance, not only to ourselves, but to our fellow labourers and to our scholars. Besides, the teachers in large cities, having the depravity of human nature presented to them in every variety of form for the exercise of their benevolence and their skill in governing and teaching, will be led to resort to a greater variety of expedients and plans for the accomplishment of these objects, than those who dwell in villages whose well ordered inhabitants rarely disturb the sober stillness of the Sabbath by the exhibition of those awful scenes of wretchedness with which our eyes become most painfully familiar. The improvements in our plans thus devised and matured, may, through the channel of our pages, be rendered subservient to the common cause.

The subject of the Monthly Concert was taken up at the meeting in August, and disposed of in the manner mentioned in our third number.

The committees appointed at a former meeting, to procure a complete list of all the schools in the county, reported in part, and measures were taken to furnish all the superintendents with blank forms to make out monthly reports.

The question discussed at this meeting was the following, viz :

What are the best methods of securing the regular attendance of Sunday scholars?

In noticing the debates of the Association, we shall not attempt to give them in the very words of the speakers, nor to embrace all that may be said by them respectively; but to state the leading arguments of each. Should we, in the discharge of our office, fall into errors, and mistate the sentiments advanced, we shall be happy to correct ourselves when furnished with such information as will enable us to do it.

The opener of the debate remarked that the punctuality of teachers was of great importance in securing the regular attendance of the scholars. By the teacher's example, the children will see that he desires to do them good, and this he (the opener) thought would be the best means to insure their better attendance.

A teacher believed that one of the best means of securing the regular attendance of the scholars, was for teachers to visit them frequently at their own houses. This he thought might be done by the majority of teachers, if they would apply a little more industry to the business of Sunday schools. He was aware that many teachers were, from their daily avocations, fully occupied during the week; but then, an early riser on the Sabbath morning would find some time to visit before the schools open; and again in the afternoon after divine service. If a class consist of eight, the teacher might visit two in each week; in this way the whole class would be visited every month, and this could be considered no great tax on the time of those most fully occupied in their proper worldly concerns. Doubtless a great obstacle to frequent visitation is presented in the circumstance that many scholars reside at a great distance from their school-rooms, and much of the teacher's time is lost in going from the residence of one scholar to that of another, an inconvenience which would be remedied if the superintendent would first place those children in his school, who reside beyond a convenient and manageable district, in some other school nearer their own residences, and employ himself and the teachers in seeking for children among the families of his own district to fill up the vacancies

such an arrangement might occasion. But in removing pupils to other schools, those should be excepted whose parents attend the church with which the school is connected, though their residence be beyond the limits of the district. The teacher who frequently visits his pupils usually gains their affections, and there is no plan equal to that of frequent domiciliary visits among the families of his pupils, for securing their regular attendance upon his Sabbath instructions.

A superintendent who had had many years experience in teaching, considered kind and affectionate treatment of the scholars as of the greatest importance in securing their regular attendance. We all know, he remarked, how great is the influence which the kindness of superiors has on the young, in gaining their affections and conciliating their dispositions. It would be well at the close of the school if the teacher would take one (or more) of his pupils by the hand, and speak kindly to him, and impress upon his mind some important truth. The arrangement of the class he thought important in gaining the affections of its members. All the pupils should sit near the teacher, that his remarks may be heard by all at the same time, and every expression of kindness and affection be so made as that all may observe it. The reading of suitable anecdotes, and encouraging conversation on Scripture subjects, was calculated to gain their attention and affections. Children are disposed to see their acquaintances, and when the exercises of the class are conducted in a familiar manner, the pupils, though they lived at the extremities of the city, would come to school, if for no other purpose than to see each other.

The speaker, however, believed visiting to be important. Visits ought to be made in a solemn manner, and duty impressed on the minds of parents. They should be addressed on these occasions rather than the children, as many parents care but little about their instruction. There is a peculiar benefit attending this method, as it affords an opportunity of pressing the subject of personal religion on parents who, in many cases, would hear the gospel in no other way. He concluded with urging the duty of praying with the families on these occasions.

A superintendent considered this the most important of all subjects which could gain the attention of Sunday school teachers. Will the absence of the children, he asked, afford any evidence of the prosperity of the school? Their presence in the school is the first

thing to be secured, and this must be done by visiting them. He had known many schools which began well, that had fallen off, and come to nothing through the neglect of the teachers to visit their scholars. He thought the second speaker was disposed to palliate the neglect of Sunday school teachers in this particular. If the children were dollars due to the teacher, would he not find *time* enough, think ye, to collect them? And are not the souls of these children of more value than dollars?—Yes, children have been for a short time in school, but *through the neglect and indifference of TEACHERS*, they have become the very worst children in the neighbourhood.

After some further desultory remarks by several members, which we do not recollect, the debate was closed for the evening, and the Association proceeded to other business.

Indisposition prevented our attendance at the September meeting, and we can give no account of the discussion, which we understand was on the "Local System."



MORTALITY IN CHILDHOOD A MOTIVE TO DILIGENCE.

Most persons who have been a few years engaged in Sunday School teaching, have witnessed the early death of children. Of all the arguments employed to excite teachers to an active, persevering and faithful discharge of their duties, none are more powerful than those derived from the uncertainty of juvenile life. This consideration is calculated to promote punctuality and regularity in our attendance, assiduity in the performance of our duty, spirituality in our instructions, holy and dignified evenness of temper, and warm affections for the children of our charge.

The following remarks of "A Sunday School Teacher," taken from a foreign publication, are applicable to all engaged in teaching, and we invite to them the particular attention of our readers.

If, on the return of the period for engaging in our labours, we seriously consider, that possibly in a short time, perhaps ere another sacred day of rest arrives, some of our youthful charge may be removed for ever, far beyond the reach of our sympathies and our care; how will it serve to chide our sluggish souls, and urge our lingering feet to speed their way to the juvenile assembly: and the same thought will have its use, when we get within the doors of our Sabbath-day seminaries. We shall consider that time is rapidly

flying, and that the moments we have to spend with the children of our care are few. Industry will mark our proceedings, and we shall be anxious to be instrumental to impart some benefit to their young and tender minds.

Perhaps, there is too great reason to lament a deficiency, generally, in regard to the communication of religious instruction, among the teachers of Sunday schools; and, alas, in how many instances do we attend to it, as a child attends to his task—cold, formal, a sort of usual routine which we are in the habit of performing. But surely if we were to view the children we have to teach, as standing on the threshold of eternity, only a step between them and death, a solemnity would pervade our instructions, of which, perhaps, they do not often partake. We should feel something of the “power of the world to come,” the employment of the inhabitants of heaven, their blessedness, and the glories of him who constitutes their bliss, would fill our minds. An “eternal weight of glory” would absorb our thoughts, and it is quite probable that in such a frame we should experience joy in our work, and not have to complain that we have laboured in vain, and spent our strength for nought.

This consideration appears to me also adapted to promote holy, dignified, evenness of temper. Sunday school teachers have much to try their patience, in the various tempers and dispositions of the children with whom they have to do; and none of us, I believe, are wholly exempt from their influence. Where, however, is the teacher, who, if he were certain that the child he is instructing would before another Lord's-day returned, be cold in death, that would not be, under such circumstances, prepared to withstand more firmly the influence of untoward dispositions? In such a case, his tenderest sympathies would be excited, pity would take the place of anger, and the consideration, that it might be the last time he should have to bear with the imperfections of his scholar, would lead him to reprove with the greatest tenderness, and to pray that the disposition of the offender might be changed, rather than resent even a breach of order, in a fretful and hasty spirit. The affections of the teacher would be called forth; his inmost soul would yearn over the young immortal, while he reflected that he must so soon part with him for ever. Much of the benign spirit which the Divine Redeemer exemplified, when he cried, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,” would be displayed; while the influence of religion would be manifested, and our own comfort and peace promoted. And, now, my fellow labourers, knowing the time, that it is high time to awake out of sleep, let us work while it is called to-day, for there is no work, nor wisdom, nor device in the grave to which *our children* and we also are fast hastening.

THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST AS A TEACHER RECOMMENDED TO SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

While the Deity and the Atonement of our blessed Saviour are the firm and delightful truths on which we securely build our ever-

lasting hopes, let us not relinquish to the opposers of these doctrines the holy influence of that pure and spotless example, which was exhibited by "God manifest in the flesh."—"Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps." This great subject affords a wide scope for the edification of the Christian and for the imitation of "an instructor of the ignorant, a teacher of babes." But I shall now confine my remarks to the example of Christ as a teacher, and endeavour to enforce the duty of imitating him on all my fellow-labourers.

While the world gazes with scorn on our employment as the instructors of the young and ignorant, it is a delightful and encouraging thought, that he who sits on the throne of heaven was once engaged in a somewhat similar "labour of love." Be it our happiness and glory to be "followers of God as dear children."

We shall notice some of those excellences of our Divine Teacher which we are required to imitate:—

1st. *The plainness of his instructions.*

We are informed that "the common people heard him gladly," and "the poor have the gospel preached to them." While the rulers of the Jews, the great and the learned, reviled his character, despised his ministry, and persecuted him incessantly, the more humble classes of society rejoiced to follow his steps, to hang on his lips, and to exult in the teacher who spake as never man spake. They would not have acted thus had he not used "great plainness of speech." What exquisite models for general instruction are the discourses of our Lord! How inimitably beautiful his parables! So plain, so easy to be remembered! How interesting as the narrative proceeds! How complete and irresistible when the conclusion is deduced!

We must imitate our Divine Teacher in the simplicity of our instructions. We have to teach those who are not only ignorant, but also young. They have, in general, possessed very few advantages, and have been placed in circumstances unfavourable to mental culture and spiritual improvement. Their language and modes of expression also are very different from ours, and in imparting spiritual instruction we shall find this a considerable obstacle. It is our duty to *study* great plainness of speech, to adapt our language to the capacities of our children, and never to rest satisfied till we are certain that they comprehend our meaning. This is not so easily accomplished as a stranger might imagine. The same truth must be presented under a variety of aspects, with copious illustrations and frequent reiterations. After our most strenuous efforts we shall find that to teach the young to *think* and to *understand* is a very difficult employment, and yet without this result we effect little or nothing. May a sense of our defects, in this important particular, lead us to observation, perseverance, and prayer, that we may be better qualified to fulfil our important engagements. Let me most urgently impress upon your minds the infinite importance of mani-

festing in your efforts to instruct the young these two grand qualifications, "SIMPLICITY AND GODLY SINCERITY."

2nd. *The earnestness and affection of his addresses.*

Condescension, benignity, and love, characterized both the manner and the instructions of our blessed Redeemer. There was nothing of repulsive coldness, nothing of proud stateliness about him; his heart glowed with affection and pity for the children of men, and his accents dropped as the gentle distilling dew, and not like icicles, cold and hard. How great his regard to the young! "Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me." Blessed Jesus, we bring many little ones to receive thy benediction. How gentle and kind his addresses:—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest! Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."—"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst let him come unto me and drink."

How tenderly did he weep over Jerusalem! how affecting his lamentation over that devoted city, and how admirably calculated the spirit which it breathes, to inspire our efforts for the salvation of the young: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" How tenderly did Christ sooth the sorrows of his disciples when about to leave them, "Let not your hearts be troubled." And when he bore the load of his cross, and was ascending to the place of his crucifixion, his heart was not wholly engrossed by his own aggravated sorrows; but he pitied and loved those who followed him, and especially the tender-hearted women: "Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children."—"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

Earnestness and affection will give amazing efficacy to our instructions: that which comes from the heart will most easily find access to the hearts of others, and especially of the young. Happily, we have to teach those who are at the most susceptible period of life, and how important is it that we should form their tender minds in the mould of the gospel. Why is it that we all remember so forcibly the instructions we have received from a mother's lips? Because they proceeded from a mother's heart and were watered with a mother's tears. Let yours be the "law of kindness," this will most effectually impress the ductile minds of the young, and thus you may lead them to that gracious Saviour who draws them "with cords of a man, with bands of love."—"We love him because he first loved us." Love will induce your children to receive your instructions most favourably, because they will feel convinced that you are their best friends. And surely when you view the young treading on the precipice of destruction, your hearts will yearn

with pity towards them, and you will feel all that benevolent energy of love which is implied in the address:—"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

But while the Saviour was thus earnest and affectionate in his instructions, "gentle even as a nurse cherisheth her children," he was not blind to the faults or insensible of the danger of his hearers. This remark leads me to consider

3rd. *The faithfulness of his instructions.*

We are told that Christ "taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes."—"And they were astonished at his doctrine for his word was with power." He spake with the dignity of God, while he appeared in the form of a man. Hence we find that his enemies were stung to the heart with his just reproofs, their conscience testified to the truth of his censures, while they thus madly opposed his claims.

Christ manifested his faithfulness to his disciples. Had he been an impostor surely his conduct would have been diametrically opposite. When Peter would have checked the career of the blessed Saviour how strongly did he reprove him, "He turned and said unto Peter," (whom he had just before commended) "Get thee behind me satan, for thou art an offence unto me, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." When James and John would have commanded fire to come down from heaven to consume a Samaritan village, "He turned and rebuked them, and said, ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of, for the son of man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." When Cleopas and his companion hesitated to believe in the resurrection of Christ, how faithfully did their unknown companion address them: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" When Thomas rashly and daringly announced his unbelief, there was one unseen who heard him, and who knew how to reprove him, with touching tenderness and with faithful severity: "Then saith he to Thomas, reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless but believing." This dignified reproof pierced the affectionate heart of Thomas and chased away his incredulity, while he exclaimed, "My Lord and my God."

Our instructions should be characterized by similar faithfulness. Do we behold in any of our children unruly passions arising, we should crush these serpents while young, lest they grow strong and spread their poisonous influence through the soul. Are others of our scholars so amiable and lovely in their dispositions that we hardly know how to detect a fault, let us be faithful even to them: let us tell them of the corruption of their nature, the temptations they must encounter, and the dangers to which their souls will be exposed. Let no partialities be manifested. Give all the children equal attention. Consult not your own comfort in teaching them

merely, but consider the moral and spiritual exigencies and dangers of all your youthful charge. It is often most necessary to pay the greatest attention to children whose dispositions are the most repulsive; if we neglect them, they may be strengthened in their evil dispositions and at last become confirmed in malignant habits. Should we only pay particular attention to the more amiable of our scholars, we may, perhaps, induce in them some degree of self-complacency, and our fondness may prove really injurious to their mental character and their moral improvement. Let us regard the soul of every child pre-eminently, and be less affected by the exterior of the casket, while we contemplate the invaluable jewel within. Let us, while contemplating our Saviour's example, hear his words thrilling through our hearts, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

4th. *His forbearance with the ignorance and infirmities of those whom he taught.*

The disciples were generally very wordly in their conceptions, and very mistaken as to the nature of Christ's kingdom. They were often fearful and unbelieving. The multitudes whom Christ taught were extremely ignorant and in many instances they followed him from improper motives. He knew all their secret thoughts, and yet how kind and compassionate he was to such dull and untractable hearers. Jesus, by taking our nature upon him, was enabled to sympathize with our sorrows and to assist us in our exigencies: "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Where our Saviour beheld faith and sincerity, though amidst much weakness, he fulfilled the prophets description of his tenderness: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench." Nor let it be forgotten, that while he imparted the best instruction he received the worst treatment. Ingratitude, reproach and persecution he experienced from man, while all his conduct exemplified the perfection of gentleness, goodness and love.

Our work requires similar forbearance and meekness. The ignorance, the indolence, and the ingratitude of some children and their parents, often distress the teacher's mind; but let us remember that our master endured the same, and let us be content to do good and be reviled for it. "Be patient, brethren, behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it until he receive the early and the latter rain. Be ye also patient, stablish your hearts." Yours is sowing time, and the soil in which you sow is unfavourable, but still remember, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

The Saviour has had long patience with us. O let a similar spirit be extended to the hapless offspring of the poor. "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."—"In your patience possess ye your souls."—"Let patience have her perfect work."—"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."—"Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

[*To be continued.*]

FIRST DAY, OR SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

"———To the care
Of sev'ral honest, well-instructed minds,
The guidance of this lawless race they gave ;
To see that they the Sabbath's solemn hours
Observed, with rev'rence due,—their tender minds
To furnish with the BIBLE's holy truths,—
And lead them to the temple of their God.—"

"Blest be the hour, and blest the day
When children now who sing and pray
First heard the voice of truth ;
When *voluntary teachers* came,
And taught to lisp the Saviour's name,
The tongue of thoughtless youth."

The Sunday School.

More than thirty years ago, and about nine years after ROBERT RAIKES commenced his benevolent labours among the poor children of Gloucester, an effort quite similar was put forth by a band of philanthropists in this our own fair city. Their object was to rescue "the offspring of indigent parents" from the snares of idleness and ignorance, and to train them, on the Lord's day, to habits of learning and industry, and to restrain "them from the profanation of that holy time." The plans of these early Sunday schools were far inferior to the present system of gratuitous teaching, when

"———no other fee but what is paid
In the warm blessings of a grateful heart,"

is demanded by the thousands now engaged in the delightful employment of conducting these Sabbath seminaries. Yet, unimportant as this germ of future greatness was, we experience a pleasure in contemplating the very beginning of the enterprise which resulted in conferring great benefits upon many youth of our city. It is a

pleasure of this kind which we experience in reading the voyages of Columbus, the history of the New-England pilgrims, or the life of William Penn. A pleasure of a still higher order is imparted by contemplating the characters of Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, and the other reformers, as they broke the chains of superstition and error which had long held the human mind in bondage; and our joy is yet more intense, when we contemplate the Christian church at the period of its being planted and watered by our blessed Lord, and nurtured by his apostles.

The FOUNDER of Sunday schools did not contemplate the employment of gratuitous teachers, nor did those who commenced schools in this city; yet here, as well as in Raikes' native city, we have reason to believe great good was done to the individuals actually taught; and as that system led the way to a far more exalted and higher style of Christian benevolence in the free and unfettered forms of later plans for Sabbath teaching, the 'First Day, or Sunday School Society' should not longer remain unnoticed in our pages.

We have frequently met with articles in religious publications within a few years, professing to give an account of the *first Sunday school* in the United States, and to determine who was its honoured founder. In but two of these notices have we seen any allusion made to this institution. In one of them it is said, that a "Sunday school was established in Philadelphia so early as 1791, for the gratuitous instruction of poor children in reading and writing, but it was designed only for their instruction in these elements; and was taught by hired teachers." It is not our present design to institute an inquiry where and when the *first* Sunday school was established; but to give a short account of the society whose title stands at the head of this article.

The first meeting was held "for the purpose of taking into consideration the establishment of Sunday schools in this city," on the 19th of December, 1790, and was attended by "the Right Rev. William White, D.D., Dr. Benjamin Rush, Dr. William Currie, Mr. Thomas Mendenhall, Mr. Peter Thompson, Jun. Mr. Mathew Carey, Mr. Thomas P. Cope, Capt. Nath. Falconer, and Mr. Joseph Sharpless."

On the 26th of the same month, another meeting was held, and a constitution for the society was adopted, and on the 11th of January, 1791, the officers were elected and the society organized. The first school was opened in March of the same year.

We prefer to state the object of this society in the language adopted by its founders in the preamble to the constitution. It is thus expressed:—

“Whereas the good education of youth is of the first importance to society, and numbers of children, the offspring of indigent parents, have not proper opportunities of instruction previous to their being apprenticed to trades. And whereas among the youth of every large city, various instances occur, of the first day of the week, called Sunday, a day which ought to be devoted to religious improvement, being employed to the worst of purposes, the depravity of morals and manners: It is therefore the opinion of sundry persons, that the establishment of first day or Sunday schools in this city would be of essential advantage to the rising generation; and for effecting that benevolent purpose, they have formed themselves into a society by the name of the Society for the institution and support of First Day, or Sunday schools in the city of Philadelphia, and the districts of Southwark and the Northern Liberties.”

We are not informed whether the projectors of this institution were acquainted with what had been done in England in the establishment of Sunday schools; their object and plans, however, were at that time very nearly the same in both countries, for it was not until about the year 1790, that gratuitous teachers were employed in Stockport, England, where this improvement was first introduced. This we infer from the fact, that the first school in Stockport was commenced, in 1784, and for *several years* the teachers were paid one shilling and sixpence, (33 cents,) per day. It seems therefore that Raikes and his immediate followers in England, and the founders of the First Day Schools here, employed hired teachers, and they contemplated little more than a reformation of “morals and manners,” particularly with respect to the better observance of the Sabbath. By the constitution it is provided that persons paying one dollar annually, or ten dollars at one time shall be members of the society, and in some years it has enrolled 600 or 700 members. In December, 1791, the Board of Officers presented a memorial to the Legislature of Pennsylvania, urging the establishment of free schools, agreeably to a provision in the State Constitution. At that time the society had three schools, containing nearly 200 scholars. Early in 1792, the board voted £10 “to be laid out in small moral books to be lent to the scholars, or given as premiums”

to the most deserving. In July, 1793, the society agreed, that "the instructions to be given in their schools should be confined to reading and writing from the Bible; but for such scholars as had not learned to read, spelling books and primers might be used." It appears from this rule, that the teachers were not allowed to give any oral instruction on religious subjects, and we do not learn from the minutes of the society that any other good was contemplated, or even obtained in the schools, than improvement in the common rudiments of reading and writing, and decency of behaviour. These of themselves were of very great importance, but many favourable opportunities to impress on tender minds the duty of personal piety must have been lost.

The city was visited with the yellow fever in 1793, the schools were suspended, and several of the active members of the society were victims of the disease. The schools were resumed in the following winter.

From March 1791 to January 2, 1795, there had been admitted into the three schools 954 scholars, 180 of whom remained under instructions at that time. The society's receipts during that period amounted to £710 14s. 0½d., and the expenditures for "*teachers' salaries*," "*filling and delivering notices*" to the members to attend meetings, &c. &c. amounted to £653 3s. 5d.; the Board of Visitors then stated that, "the utility and success which have attended this mode of education, have been equal to the expectations of the society. There are at present many instances in the schools, both among the males and females, of pupils, who, without any other opportunity of acquiring the benefits of school learning," than that afforded by this society, "are now capable of reading and spelling with correctness and propriety, and of writing an easy, fair, and legible hand."—"Besides which they have been, in a great measure, prevented from mispending their time on Sunday, and from acquiring a habit of idleness, which often proves a source of public, as well as private misfortune."

In 1797, the society succeeded in procuring an Act of Incorporation from the proper authorities, for which they had applied three years before. Their corporate character is indicated in their legal proceedings by a plain neat seal, with the following motto, "*LICET SABBATIS BENEFACERE, INCORPORATED 1797.*" And in a circle on the border, are the words, "*FIRST DAY, OR SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY, PHILADELPHIA.*"

From March 1791 to January 1800, \$3968 had been received, and nearly that sum expended in the support of the three schools. During that period, 2127 scholars had been admitted into the schools, and the attendance was about 180 at a time. The average annual expense for nine years was \$403, being about two dollars and twenty-five cents for each scholar per annum, more than four times the expense on the present system of Sunday schools, and forty cents more for each scholar than schools on the Lancasterian plan where they are taught five days in the week.

In 1810 the board published a summary account of their proceedings during the preceding nineteen years, but did not state the number of scholars admitted since 1800. The total receipts up to July, 1810, amounted to \$7639 63. From 1810 to 1815-16, when Sabbath schools were established by gratuitous teachers, this society continued their schools much in the same way as in former years, but we are not able to state the number of children who have received instruction. Since the last mentioned period, the small income of the society has been appropriated by the Board of Visitors to schools in the city and districts. Thus, by defraying the expenses of books, rents, &c. the board have greatly aided our Sunday schools on their present improved system.

The venerable Bishop WHITE has been the president of this society more than *thirty-three years*, that is, from its commencement. Some others of its founders and early patrons remain, but many have fallen asleep. Of the latter we would add the names of Thomas Say Bartram, Jacob Shoemaker, Robert Patton, William Bingham, William Chancellor, Tench Coxe, Thomas Savery, Matthias Keeley, Thomas Dobson, and Gilbert Gaw. Of the former, Jacob Ridgway, Samuel Fisher, Samuel Wetherill, Elliston Perot, Robert Ralston, Cornelius Comegys, Paul Beck, Jr., Thomas Armat, and William Rawle, &c. &c. But,

“To tell the venerable names of all
That joined their efforts in this noble cause,
And give the praises that their zeal deserves,
Would be a task too arduous——”

We are informed on good authority, that many of our very worthy fellow citizens received most, or all their early education in these schools. The instruction there received, and the habits of order and industry there inculcated in early life, have been the

means, with the blessing of God, of leading them to respectability and usefulness, and in some cases, to opulence : and knowing the fact that the pupils of these schools were taught to read the Bible, we may reasonably hope that some of them embraced the precious truth of the gospel in the love of it, and became wise unto salvation. Whether this was the blessed privilege of those who belonged to the First Day Schools, is the most interesting inquiry to the Christian, who estimates the value of literary acquirements and worldly prosperity, only as they subserve the cause of genuine piety ; but in the advantages which this institution has conferred upon our city, the mere political economist will find abundant cause of gratitude to its founders and supporters, since upon a large number of the recipients of their bounty, have been bestowed all the blessings which he seeks or anticipates. If then the Sunday schools disseminate the elements of knowledge, and promote order, industry, honesty, and sobriety, among the rising generation, can he withhold the expression of his approbation who looks upon these acquirements as the only foundation upon which our free institutions rest, as the only means which can secure their permanency ? And yet how few of our political economists, or even our more wealthy Christian economists, do we find now enrolled as annual contributors to Sunday School Unions ? Are there not some persons in our own city of both these classes, who derive a pleasure from the consideration that the seat of the American Sunday School Union is located in Philadelphia ? and yet of all her population but few are enrolled as annual subscribers to this truly National Institution. It is not because of opposition,—it is not because the institution is thought to be useless that we see it so faintly supported by palsied hands ;—it is because of a cold indifference to its momentous objects that so little interest is felt for its success. But it is said to be doing very well,—the society prospers,—granted ; but how much more would it prosper if its means of doing good were increased ? If it be *well* to do good to *sixty thousand Sunday scholars*, it would surely be *better* to confer the same blessing on six hundred thousand. If the “First Day, or Sunday School Society,” prospered, and was useful, (which no one can doubt,) under the disadvantage of deducting from its funds an annual stipend for each teacher, how much more useful is the institution which employs all its funds in supplying books, &c. for the schools, and receives the *gratuitous*, and truly benevolent labours of *eight thousand teachers* ? We do not undervalue the great good

done by the venerable First Day Society, but we make this comparison because we think it presents the claims of our Union in their true light; and we do hope that those who cannot give it their support from higher motives, will come to it, bending under the weight of their offerings, as the guardians of our free institution, our political liberty, and the sovereignty of the people.

IMPROVEMENT OF SUNDAY SCHOLARS IN READING.

In the instruction of the junior classes, the collective plan of teaching is adviseable, if the school-room be large enough: young children, if left to learn by themselves, are not likely to pay attention to their lessons. The youngest children should be taught to speak slowly and distinctly; for, if a contrary habit be acquired at first, it is not easy to remove it afterwards. Much trouble is occasioned by early neglect; and the formation of many bad habits is prevented by early attention.

In all the classes, the children should be informed, on the previous week, of the lessons or chapters they will have to read the ensuing Sunday. The children should previously spell the most difficult words at home, and come prepared to read with facility at school. Our scholars, in reading on the common plan, often count down to the verse which they see will come to them in regular course; they put their fingers on it, and perhaps glance over it, and then they gain a little time to gaze about or to amuse themselves. This is a bad habit, and therefore it is adviseable, whenever a child is found looking off his book, to call on him to go on from the last word of the lad who was reading, even though it should be in the middle of a sentence; or the children may be required to read as their names are called, and not as they stand. Another plan may be occasionally adopted: let each child only read to a stop, and then the next go on with it: this keeps up such a rapid course of reading, that there is no time for any scholar to be negligent: it also habituates the children to observe the stops, and to use the proper tone of voice which they require.

Great care should be taken to prevent the children from reading in a slovenly indistinct manner. The teacher should always read the first verse himself, and afterwards regularly take his turn: this will teach the children how they ought to read. Some children skip the smaller words, or fail to pronounce parts of syllables; their only desire appears to be to stumble through to the end, without any care or understanding. Always be particular in requiring the distinct and complete pronunciation of every word and syllable. Correct pronunciation is more connected with correct thinking than many persons imagine. Children generally read too rapidly: accustom them to read deliberately, and with particular reference to the stops. Do not allow them to read in a tone. Some Sunday school teachers have thought these points of minor importance, and unde-

serving of notice; but surely they do not reflect that such attention in reading is necessary for understanding what is perused; and that those who learn in a slovenly manner, often forget, in subsequent life, how to read, or find it attended with so many difficulties, that they neglect this important talent, and thus do not fulfil the divine command, "Search the Scriptures."

As soon as your scholars have read their lessons, you should proceed to ask them various questions as to their contents; and you should give explanations of any difficulties they may contain. The children should be encouraged to inquire the meaning of what they do not comprehend; and you should urge them to think for themselves. You should endeavour to impress the whole lesson on your scholars' hearts and consciences with kindness and solemnity: and, where any particular part of the subject is peculiarly suitable to any one of your children, you should draw his most pointed attention to this topic. In order to explain this important subject more fully, we shall give an example. We will suppose that the class has read the 18th chapter of Luke, from the 35th to the 43d verse.

Teacher.—Is there any thing in this passage on which you wish to ask me any explanations, before I proceed to question you?

First Scholar.—It says here that Christ was come nigh unto Jericho. I was reading lately in Joshua that this city was burnt, and that Joshua pronounced a curse against any one who should rebuild it.

Teacher.—Let us turn to the 6th chapter of Joshua.—(*They examine it.*)

Teacher.—Now turn to 1 Kings 16:34, and you will find that this city was rebuilt, and Joshua's curse fulfilled.

Second Scholar.—Is this the same miracle as we read of in other parts of the Testament?

Teacher.—Yes. Turn to Matthew 20:29, then to Mark 10:46; so that we see three of the Evangelists state this same most interesting fact.

Third Scholar.—What was the use of all three giving the same account?

Teacher.—By closely examining these three accounts, we shall see that there is some difference, though no disagreement, in each; just the same as if three of you boys were to tell me of any thing you had all seen; each one would tell the story in his own way; one would perhaps tell more than the other, and, by joining all your reports together, I should get the whole account. These little differences prove that the Gospel is not a cunningly devised fable. The testimony of two or three witnesses was required by the Jewish law; and God has been pleased to give us the united testimony of four,—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, to the principal facts; and their accounts are so plain, consistent, and well-supported, that he who rejects their report must be wilfully blind, and must love darkness rather than light. If you have no further explanations to request of me, I will now ask you a few questions on the passage you have read.

What city was Christ near to?—Who was sitting by the way-side?—Why was Christ called Jesus of Nazareth?—What did the blind man cry out?—How was Christ the son of David?—How did the people treat the blind man?—When he was rebuked, did he leave off crying out?—Did Jesus notice him?—What question did Christ put to him?—What reply did the blind man make?—How did Christ grant his request?—What grace did Christ commend in this poor man?—When Jesus had said “Receive thy sight,” what followed?—How did the blind man act when his sight was restored?—Did the people join with him?—Are we in any respect like this poor man?—When we hear of Christ as a Saviour, what should we do?—What should we pray for?—If any persons oppose us, should we leave off prayer?—Does Christ always notice the poor and persevering supplicant?—Does Christ always encourage faith?—When God bestows any blessing on us, what should we render to him?—Should we feel thankful to God for our eye-sight?—How should it be employed?—Should the success of this poor blind man encourage each one of us to go to Christ?—Did Christ ever refuse any one who came to him when he was on earth?—Is he less kind now he is in heaven?—My dear children, while Jesus Christ is now passing by, O hasten to seek his mercy, and let all opposition only lead you to cleave to him with full purpose of heart. You are blind by reason of sin: let it be your prayer, “Open thou mine eyes;” and may the eyes of your understanding be enlightened from above. Then will you glorify God with your bodies and spirits, which are his.

In introducing this plan, it may be at first necessary that the children should be allowed to look at the book; but when they have answered the questions from the book, they should be required to shut it, and then go through another examination on the same subject, without the assistance of the book. The teachers should make the questions very easy at first: they should be very short indeed; and they should be adapted to the talents and disposition of the youth who is questioned. Experience in these matters will be the teacher’s best guide; and we venture to affirm that, by the adoption of the plan we have sketched, they will be led continually to discover fresh beauties in the sacred volume; and that their own minds, as well as those of their scholars, will thus become richly stored with the inestimable treasures of the Sacred Scriptures.

We cannot conclude these remarks without strenuously enforcing on the mind of every teacher the great importance of a diligent study of the portion of Scripture appointed for the children. During the week, the chapters selected should be seriously examined, the assistance of suitable commentaries should be obtained, and you should be enabled to explain the difficulties of the passage, and to give an account of such eastern customs as often throw a very pleasing light on the divine volume. Above all, you should abound in prayer for the promised assistance of the Holy Spirit, that he may take of the things of Christ, and show them unto you; and that he may qualify you not only to understand, but to explain, the

inspired word to your youthful charge. Let the Bible be the "man of your counsel," and the joy of your heart. Let it be your continual effort to induce your pupils to read the Scriptures "with the understanding," and keep simplicity and clearness continually in your view. "In the church" (and how much more in the school) "I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." (1 Cor. 14:19,20.) Some of your most forward children will quickly discover whether you are "children in understanding," or whether you resemble the "virtuous woman," both as to the wisdom and the affectionate mode of your instructions: "She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness." (Prov. 31:26.) The respect of your scholars will be in proportion to their opinion of your superiority to them.—*Lloyd's Teacher's Manual.*

SUNDAY SCHOOL GLEANINGS.

"Mother," said a girl of ten years old—"have you *faith*, mother?" "My dear child," replied the parent, "that is a great thing to say *I have faith*." "But mother," she continued, "I want you to tell me if you have *enough faith*?" [Here the child wept aloud.] "For I thought of it *last Sabbath*, when I saw you *sew the button on my belt*." "O!" said a younger sister, joining in the conversation, "if I *knew* as much as you did sister Mary, I believe I *should not* have told that lie I did about the thimble." Here the mother quoted a passage from the parable of the talents, telling them that they would at last have to account for all the knowledge that had been given them; the words not being repeated precisely in the text of the Scriptures, the children quickly corrected their mother, saying, "that is not right, mother; this is the way it is in the Bible:" "After a long time the lord of these servants cometh and reckoneth with them." "Oh, what a wicked servant that was," said the little girls; "and that steward too was wicked, that did not forgive his fellow servant one hundred pence, when his lord had pity on him, and forgave one hundred talents." "How I pity Mrs. O——," said the eldest girl, "and I often pray for her." "Why in particular for her?" said the mother. She replied, "because she has so many trials." "So do I pray for her too," said the youngest, (seven years old) "and I don't want *any body on earth to hear my prayers*."

Such is the pleasing tenor of the juvenile mind under Bible instruction; and who is not *reproved* as they are reminded by our little Sunday scholars in their conversation as above related of the following gospel precepts: "What doth it profit if a man say he hath *faith* and have *not works*." James 2:14. "Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake doth forgive you." Ephes. 4:32.

"When thou prayest, enter into thy closet and pray to thy Father which is in *secret*." Matt. 6:6. A practical comment on these scripture texts is found in these religious thoughts of our little Sunday scholars.—*N. Y. Tea. Mag.*

Two boys, who had formerly been very careless and irregular in their attendance at Sunday school, told their teacher (who inquired after their parents,) that they were going in the country for some weeks. "And are you going too?" said the teacher. "No, sir," replied the lads, "*we must stay to go to Sunday school.*"—*Ibid.*

A lad, who had been for a long time at a Sunday school, and had greatly reformed in his conduct, was engaged at the store of an apothecary; but his parents finding it hindered his attendance at church and Sunday school, they removed him, saying, "we cannot bear to see him lose so much by giving up his Sunday school, for the gain of his wages won't pay for all that."—*Ibid.*

A girl of thirteen years old died a few weeks since in our neighbourhood, experiencing the most happy temper of mind—beautifully illustrating these words of the psalmist: "out of the mouth of *babes* thou hast ordained strength;" and to the many who are disposed to gainsay such excellent displays of divine grace, we would answer in the same words of the Redeemer himself: "yea, have ye never read, 'out of the mouths of *babes* and sucklings thou hast *perfected praise.*'"

A few weeks before her sickness, of her own accord, she called on a pious young woman, asked her to teach her more about the Bible, "for I am much troubled," said the child, "about my soul." This pious friend explained with simplicity, the way of salvation, and directed her to the Saviour of sinners, telling her to go home and *read the Bible*. This she diligently did, and was shortly so ill, as to leave no hope of her recovery. But she grew in grace and in knowledge daily, and died with the most joyful hopes, and an admirable strength of faith, saying, "she *wanted to go*, that she might be with her Saviour." Her *love* seemed boundless; and it was usual with her to say, "I love every body that *loves my Saviour*; I love them so much, I want to put my arms round their neck; and I want *every body* to love my Saviour, that they may *be glad as I am.*" She sent for two aged persons, who had led profane lives, and exhorted them with great firmness and tenderness, as also several of her little companions. Shortly before her departure, she said to a pious friend, who often visited her, "When I am dead, tell *the children* to think about religion; speak to them from these words: 'those that seek me *early* shall *find me.*'" A few hours before her death, she joined, as she had often before, in singing the following favourite verse of the 17th Psalm:

"This world's a dream—an empty show ;
But the *bright* world to which I go,
Has joys *substantial* and sincere—
When shall I wake and find me there ?"

Such was the pious love, the heavenly desires of a child, young in years, but not in wisdom, verifying the prophetic truth of Isaiah—"The *child* shall die *an hundred years old*, but the *sinner* an hundred years old shall be accursed." At beholding so bright an example of the *power of faith*, what heart can fail to say, "let me die the death of the righteous."—*Ibid.*

The following anecdote was related at a meeting of the Association of Sunday School Teachers, by one of the members, and it is a striking example of the utility of Sabbath schools, and proves the force of habit, and may teach how highly such habits should be appreciated.

A missionary to one of the western counties of this state, held a meeting on a Sunday evening, in a thinly inhabited country. The roads were so bad, that travelling in any other way than on foot was impracticable ; the difficulties he had to encounter almost disheartened him ; and he began to fear that he should not do any good in so unpromising a country. When he came to the place where the meeting was held, he found a few collected together ; some from a distance as far as he had come himself. As soon as he was seated, he was surprised to see a boy neatly dressed approaching, and after shaking him affectionately by the hand, he asked the missionary if he recollected him. Years had passed since they had met, and the image of his Sunday scholars, with their names, had been forgotten. Did you not, inquired the boy, teach in the Sunday school in ——— ? and do not you remember the boy who was your class monitor ? My dear James, said the delighted missionary, taking both the hands of the boy extended within his own, (and pressing them as the circumstances connected with the Sunday school flashed across his mind,) my dear boy, how you have altered in looks—how glad I am to meet you *here*—how came you to this meeting ? I had heard, said the boy, that a missionary from New York was to preach here this evening ; and I wanted to see if he knew any thing about *our* Sunday school : besides, since I used to go to school on Sunday, I would much rather attend church. I do not know what to do with myself. I was so glad when I heard there was to be a meeting in our township once more. The surprise at meeting a Sunday scholar in this wilderness, only equalled the delight he experienced at the consciousness, that one boy had, by his instrumentality, acquired the habit of attending divine worship when he had an opportunity. The thought that he might farther advance the good work that had been founded on so good a basis, added fresh vigour to his desponding feelings, and he entered upon his duties with renewed ardour. Such an occurrence as this speaks volumes in favour of Sabbath schools. The child might have attended at first from necessity or compulsion ; by de-

grees he had practised until it became habitual; and when far away from the influence and commands of the Sunday school, he still retained all its habits, and that day walked many a rough mile, with the hope of hearing something of his former Sunday school, and with a desire to be present at a meeting of Christians of the same denomination, with whom he had five years before been accustomed on Sundays to associate.—*Ibid.*

Mr. —, was once a respectable and industrious man; but through the influence of his evil companions, he yielded to the temptation of liquor, and soon became a poor, worthless, and miserable being.

If he had been the only person that suffered, the evil would have been comparatively small; but he had an affectionate family, who were rendered miserable by this change in his character. He no longer laboured to provide for them, but spent most of the day in the grog shop; at night returning home, full of cursing and bitterness—consuming the provisions his wife had procured—cursing her because she had no more, and thus depriving the distressed family of the last morsel of bread.

While the family were in this condition, they were visited by a friend—the children's friend, who invited their little girl to attend the Sabbath school. With her mother's consent she entered the school; and very soon was able to read, and in some measure to understand the Scriptures. One Sabbath morning as she was preparing for school, her father, (as he had frequently done before,) began quarrelling with her mother, and said in an angry tone, which made the little girl tremble—"Wife, there is no need of making all this fuss about Sabbath schools; Mary shall not go there any more—she learns nothing." Her mother began to plead in behalf of the school, and her father became still more enraged; when the little girl stepped between them, the tears rolling down her cheeks, and said, "Father I *do* learn at the Sabbath school." After cursing her, he asked, "What do you learn?" She replied, "Father, I have learned what God says about those that *swear*, and *get drunk*, and *break the Sabbath*." He then asked her what God said about such persons? She ran and brought her little Bible; and turning it over, read to him from the sacred volume, "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."—"And drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God"—"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Conviction immediately seized upon his conscience, and he fell upon the floor, exclaiming, "Oh what shall I do—what shall I do to be saved?" He was led to the arms of a gracious Saviour, and we are assured that he is now pursuing the path of duty, and that every Sabbath morning he takes his little daughter by the hand, and leads her to the Sabbath school.—*S. S. Visitant.*

REVIEW.

The Sunday School RECEIVING BOOK.
Quarto. Philadelphia: American
Sunday School Union. 1824. *Union*
price 31½ cents. *Non-Union* 37½
cents.

The Sunday School MINUTE BOOK.
Quarto. Philadelphia: American
Sunday School Union. 1824. *Union*
price 50 cents. *Non-Union* 62½
cents.

We have never known a Sunday school prosper that neglected to keep a proper and regular register of their scholars, and records of their proceedings. The merchant, or the mechanic might as well expect success in business without keeping a correct account of their daily transactions, as the conductors of a Sunday school who keep but loose "memorandums" of *their* business on slips of paper, or perhaps none at all. Too many teachers very erroneously consider the time occupied in entering the names of the scholars in a receiving book, keeping minutes of the day's transactions, examining and correcting the class books, &c. as mispent time; and yet when they are called upon for a report, they can never arrive at the numbers in the school, or give an account of their progress any nearer than is expressed by the term "*about*." Our patience is often put to the test when we are endeavouring to ascertain the numbers taught in a school or a town, to find ourselves compelled after an attentive examination of reports, to find "*there were about*" so many, and the like expressions. Surely there can be no more difficulty in knowing how many scholars we have in our school on a given Sabbath, than in knowing how many sheep we have in our flock, or how many dollars we have in bank;

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and the thousandth part of the attentions bestowed on the latter subjects, would secure us all needful information on the former.

In the "introduction" to the Receiving Book, the Committee remark:

Persuasion and acts of kindness are the principal means used in Sunday schools to gain the affections of the pupils, and to maintain order. To apply these means successfully, the conductors of schools should know the place of residence, occupation, general habits, and moral character of the parents or guardians of the children committed to their charge, and should be intimately acquainted with the tempers and disposition of their pupils, whether old or young. With this information, the conductors will be able to maintain order and system in their schools, and to give a satisfactory report of their labours at the close of the year. To assist them in this duty is the object of the present work, and the Committee of Publication hope it will answer the important purposes for which it is designed.

The names of the pupils should be recorded as soon as they enter the schools, and never be suffered to leave it without assigning the cause, which should also be noted in the Receiving Book.

A record of the daily transactions should also be kept, and for this purpose, the Committee have prepared a Minute Book, which is introduced with the following remarks:

The employment of *gratuitous teachers* is one of the most striking characteristics of the Sunday school system. This circumstance, and the no less important one, that the time allotted for teaching is very short, should prompt the publishers of Sunday school books to devise the best methods for lessening the mechanical labour of the teachers, and at the same time secure correctness and uniformity in the minutes of the schools.

To promote these objects was the purpose of the Committee in furnishing these books, and in doing it, the Union have laid our teachers under a new obligation, for there is not a work on their catalogue that can be of greater importance in promoting system and correctness in our schools, than the two works before us, which we cordially recommend.

The CHRISTIAN ALMANACK, for the year of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 1825. Being the first after Bissextile or Leap Year, and the Forty-ninth of the Independence of the United States. Philadelphia: American Tract Society, and American Sunday School Union. 12mo. pp. 36.

There are few families in our country that do not annually purchase an Almanack,—a work read by the old and the young,—the grave and the gay. The newspapers of the day, in proportion to the matter they contain, exert a far less influence on the rising generation, than do these very necessary “notes of time;” and yet how little attention has been formerly paid to render them useful and instructive. Indeed, a large proportion of the common Almanacks have been frequently filled with most absurd and profane stories, calculated to vitiate the taste, and ridicule religion; and hence we felt great pleasure when the American Tract Society announced their intention of publishing a *Christian Almanack*, designed to answer all the good purposes of a common calendar, and to promote a knowledge of true religion, and an acquaintance with the benevolent efforts of the day. In four years they have circulated more than *one hundred and forty-six thousand* copies of these

useful little works, which have probably been read by five times that number of persons; and besides the happy influence which they have thus exerted, the profits have enabled the society to increase the number and extend the circulation of their other tracts.

The American Sunday School Union in connexion with the Tract Society, have published an edition of the *Almanack* for 1825, which we now have the pleasure of recommending to our readers, not only as a work of standard character, but as an instrument of promoting extensively the spread of the Gospel, and the interests of true religion. In the preface the Committee of Publication remark:

When they contemplate each number as visiting fifty thousand families, and remaining a year in the hands of the parents and the children, they have a delightful anticipation of good which will result, in this world, and in eternity; and they are animated in their efforts to render it a means of conveying spiritual instruction, which, by the blessing of God, may make many wise unto salvation. They have endeavoured to adapt it to the condition of all classes of the community, and hope especially, by the variety and interest which are introduced, to gain the attention of the young.

The institution which sends forth this edition of the *Christian Almanack*, is particularly engaged in promoting the education of the young, and the Committee most earnestly desire that this little work may afford them entertainment and instruction, and contribute to their present and future happiness.

They commend the work to the friends of religion, and respectfully invite their patronage; praying that the influences of the Holy Spirit, may attend it wherever it shall be circulated.

Merchants and traders might dispose of this work for the Union, during their fall business, and thereby promote the objects of the institution.

INTELLIGENCE.**NEW HAMPSHIRE S. S. UNION.**

It is with great pleasure that we announce the formation, by our friends in New Hampshire, of the *first State Sunday School Union*, auxiliary to the National Society. This event, deeply interesting to the friends of Sunday schools, took place at Londonderry on the 9th of last month. The Board of the American Sunday School Union opened a correspondence with several persons in that state some months ago, and when they were informed that an effort was making to hold a meeting at Londonderry on the subject of Sunday schools, during the sitting of the General Association of New Hampshire, the Board commissioned the Rev. GARDINER SPRING, D. D. of New-York, to represent the American Sunday School Union at Londonderry, should such a meeting take place. We presume the Doctor attended, though it is not expressly stated in the account of the meeting published in the New Hampshire Repository. The Union adopted the constitution published in our last No. with such alterations as circumstances required. The state consists of seven counties, for each of which, the managers appointed a DISTRICT COMMITTEE, of seven. The following are the officers of the Union.

REV. DANIEL DANA, D. D. *President*.
 HON. JOSHUA DARLING, *Vice Pres.*
 REV. JOHN H. CHURCH, D. D. *Cor. Sec.*
 REV. J. CURTIS, *Recording Secretary*,
 MR. JOHN W. SHEPARD, *Treasurer*.

Managers.

REV. I. W. PUTNAM,
 JONATHAN NYE,
 JONATHAN FRENCH,
 MR. A. F. HILDRETH,
 HON. JOHN VOSE,
 PROF. C. B. HADDUCK.

The following are the names of the Secretaries of the *County Committees*, viz:—

Rockingham.—Rev. Jon. French.
Merimack.—Samuel Fletcher, Esq.
Hillsborough.—Rich. Boylston, Esq.
Strafford.—Stephen C. Lyford, Esq.
Cheshire.—Rev. Zedekiah S. Barstow.

Grafton.—George Woodward, Esq.
Coes.—Rev. James R. Wheelock,

The Board agreed that a Depository of small books, to be procured of the Parent Institution at Philadelphia, be kept at Concord, and that John W. Shepard be the Agent to superintend it;—and likewise, among other measures it was resolved that the County Committees be requested as soon as may be, to ascertain the state of the Sabbath schools in the several towns in their respective counties, and make report to the Corresponding Secretary.

We trust this institution will be the means of conferring lasting blessings upon the rising and future generations of New-Hampshire, and that her example will stimulate the friends of Sunday schools, in her sister states to “go and do likewise.”

ONEIDA SABBATH SCHOOL UNION.

We rejoice in being able to communicate to our readers, the interesting intelligence of the formation of this institution. The ONEIDA SABBATH SCHOOL UNION was organized on the first of September, and has now commenced operations. Its principal objects, set forth in the Preamble to the Constitution, are to combine the efforts of active labourers, to encourage and assist infant societies, to establish Sabbath schools where it is thought expedient, and give greater weight and influence to the institution, where

it is little known. The Constitution is to be published, together with a Circular Letter, by the Corresponding Secretary, and a copy sent to each Sabbath school in the county; all of which will, we trust without delay, unite their hearts and offerings in the "Oneida Union."

The Officers of the Society constitute a Board to manage its concerns. They have put themselves under the protection of the "American Sunday School Union."

Officers for the year ensuing.

William Williams, *President.*

Jacob Snyder, *1st Vice President.*

Thomas F. Field, *2d Do.*

Samuel M. Blatchford, *Cor. Sec.*

William Walker, *Recording Secretary.*

Charles Morris, *Treasurer.*

Charles Hastings, *Agent for supplying Auxiliaries with books.*

G. S. Wilson, *Agent for visiting the schools embraced in the Union.*

The funds will be devoted to the assistance of infant societies,—to the establishment of new schools,—and to such other objects as shall be thought expedient for the good of the Union. And we confidently trust, that the citizens of our own community, who have so long and so fully realized the benefits of the Sabbath school, will now evince their gratitude, by generously imparting to this institution, the means of extending the blessing to others.—*S. S. Visitant.*

CANADA SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

The operations of this union seem to be principally confined to the Lower Province. In the Upper Province, however, there are 26 schools. That indefatigable missionary, the Rev. T. Osgood, visited some of these schools, and in his report to the Union he observes:

It being a divine command to love our neighbours as ourselves, I have for the last year devoted a portion of my time and labours to the destitute parts of the neighbouring govern-

ment; believing that by establishing Sunday schools and Bible and Tract Societies on both sides of the boundary line, there will be less need of expending property in the erection of *Forts* and the building of *Battle ships*. And had there been one fourth of the property expended, for a century past, in promoting moral and religious societies, which has been wasted in useless and unnecessary warfare, the prospect of the moral world, would have been infinitely more delightful to the eye of the Christian than it now is.

He found an increasing attention to the subject of Sabbath school instruction in the Upper Province which he visited. He organized 38 committees, in different places for forming Sunday school and Juvenile libraries, and mentions that government had been petitioned to afford them aid. He had formed many Bible classes also, for the improvement of adults and the most forward youths, in the study of the holy Scriptures. Dorcas societies had also been formed in many places to visit the poor children and clothe them and send them to school.

In the Lower Province about 40 schools are reported. In about 15 of these schools are 750 scholars. We regret the Committee did not state the exact number of schools in connexion with their Union; and take occasion to remark, that reports of Sunday schools should be drawn up in the most simple and explicit terms, as it is of great importance to learn the precise numbers, which, by a little more attention may be ascertained. Several instances are given of scholars having committed a very large number of scripture verses, and it is also mentioned that several French scholars attended the schools. Montreal is mentioned as the centre of Sabbath

schools in the Province, and there the average number of attendants is about 500 scholars.

Among the *Abenakis*, a tribe of Indians of about 400, settled at the mouth of St. Francis River, is a school, taught by an aged Indian: his name is *T. Annance*.

He was educated at Dartmouth College in the state of New-Hampshire. Though a common week school and devoted to the objects of such Institutions, it possesses many claims upon public attention. It affords the singular exhibition (with us) of one of the "Sons of the Forest," possessing the qualifications of an instructor in the English language, and manifesting an ardent desire to impart the knowledge, which he possesses, to the children of his own tribe, by establishing a school among them, and becoming their teacher, thus causing an exchange of the bow, and the arrow, for the more important objects of civilization and refinement. The school at present consists of nineteen scholars, who attend constantly, and from the specimens exhibited to the committee of their penmanship, we are led to entertain pleasing hopes of its usefulness. The Montreal Bible Society has made to it a donation of eleven Bibles and four Testaments; and it has farther received from the depository of this Society, seven dozen and a half of London school books. In a letter to one of your Committee, the master writes, "The interest I feel for the instruction of our Indian children, will always lead me to do all in my power to promote it; and I am convinced, that no reformation can be effected, without the knowledge of the holy Scriptures."

The closing remarks of the Committee are of general application, and we quote them:

No one, who looks around him can fail to observe the great want of more animated, vigorous and united exertions in rescuing the children of this Province from the allurements of error and the paths of vice. Depravity

stalks around with its baleful influence, and hundreds are annually falling victims at the shrine of their own vicious and depraved appetites.—Truth with an unerring finger, points to the cause of this great moral degradation—it is dated in early childhood, and strictly and justly ascribed to the want of early religious education. The mind when most susceptible of impressions, should receive the implantation of the important principles of Christianity—it should then be nourished with that food, which will impart to it a livening principle of good and an inspiring impulse in the performance of those things, which tend to our happiness here, and insure to us a blessed immortality beyond the grave. And where can we find an institution, that presents so many facilities for the attainment of this important object, as Sunday schools.—They may strictly be termed the great nurseries of piety.

CITY PRISON SUNDAY SCHOOL, DUBLIN.

The following account of the Sunday school in the city prison of Dublin will be read with the deepest interest. We make no apology for its length, as we hope it will excite some who live in the neighbourhood of American Prisons to commence in them, where not already done, schools for the same purpose. Some of our own prisons present the most shocking scenes, where the young offenders are crowded into the same apartments with the old, and very soon become versed in all their crimes and depravity.

A few serious young men, seeing the neglected and deplorable state of Newgate, the city prison of Dublin, undertook the task of forming a Sunday school there. Some of our Sunday school teachers find it a matter of trial and discouragement to collect together even a small number of ignorant, obstinate, and lazy children; but had those teachers to encounter

the turbulent, unruly, squalid, and depraved crew of adult criminals in this prison, the refuse and vilest of the land, they would indeed consider their trials and labours light. These praiseworthy young men had first to obtain permission from the civil magistrates; to parley with, and allow a certain sum to the turnkeys for admission and attention; and, lastly, they had to *entreat* and *persuade* the prisoners themselves to come to the room allotted to the use of the school. Well do I remember the first day; they went like "prophets into the rebellious vineyard," *alone*, for the turnkeys left them to themselves. The prisoners immediately fastened the door, began to jostle them from side to side, endeavouring to pick their pockets (which they prudently emptied previous to their entrance.) They even got a bucket of water, and flung it over the legs of one gentleman who happened to have on silk stockings. This was in a court-yard, into which all the prisoners are let loose from the time they get up to the time they go to rest (if they can rest;) with no shelter from cold or rain, excepting one large dark cell (often too small for all the criminals,) with a table in the middle, and a fire to dress their own food. This they call their kitchen; but the walls black with smoke and filth, no windows, and the room full of dirty, unfortunate wretches, who stretch themselves the whole day long on the table, singing songs, fighting, cursing, and swearing in a most shocking manner, ready for every mischief, and like wild beasts ready to spring upon the first prey, reminded the spectator rather of the infernal region. No wonder, then, that they abused these young men, who were obliged to summon up their whole courage and perseverance, and call out earnestly that they were come as friends to do them good. With the interference of the turnkeys, who now came to their aid, the prisoners were quieted.

Never did I behold, nor could I conceive, such scenes as I witnessed that day. Upwards of two hundred immortal creatures lost to every sense of virtue, ignorant of, and blasphem-

ing their Maker; full of the spirit of Satan! When I entered their kitchen, and saw their deplorable condition, I could not refrain from shedding tears. O sin! what hast thou done? transforming creatures made like to the image of God into brutes and devils! Never did I so sincerely thank the God of mercy for the measure of grace bestowed upon so unworthy a sinner; without which grace, I should have been as bad, or even worse, than any of these unfortunates.

To vary their sport, and from mere curiosity and the novelty of the thing, most of them came up to school, others remained at the door, and others said that they did not want to become Methodists—all were of the Popish persuasion (if they made any profession at all.) When quieted and seated, one of the young men, who possessed peculiar talents for the undertaking, began to address them. He told them, that the sole object these young men had in coming to them, and giving up their time to *their* instruction, was most disinterestedly for *their* benefit, both in this life and that which is to come. He spoke of the dreadful consequences of sin, and the eternal punishment that awaited the ungodly; of Christ as the friend of sinners, who is ever willing and ready to receive the most vile; of the awful stage in which those stand, who neglect Christ as a Saviour, who live and die without God and without hope. The criminals remained in mute amazement, perhaps never having heard such truths before. Some, who had once known better days and better thoughts, had remorse visibly depicted in their countenances. But suddenly, one of them, whom they called their captain, a robust, short, hardy man, wearing a cockade, and having a huge bludgeon, started up and said, that "the gentleman was right—that we were very kind in coming at all—and that he would come himself every Sunday to read." The rest, of course, gave a shout of applause. Before we parted, another of the young men prayed (all kneeling,) that God would bless their humble endeavours, and that some poor prodigal in this wretched prison

may be induced to return to his Father's house. We attempted to give out a hymn, but it was such a matter of ridicule to them, that we desisted. On the whole, our success was greater than we had anticipated.

The following Sunday, we repaired again to the prison with a greater degree of interest and confidence; and were much pleased and surprised at seeing almost all the men ranged along the wall with clean faces and hands, and the captain marshalling them, mounted on the shoulders of a poor idiot, confined for theft. We were saluted with a cheer, and we then proceeded to our room. What inward joy mixed with horror did we feel when we contemplated ourselves, locked up in a gloomy room with so many wretched persons, whose desperate and depraved hearts had caused them to commit actions for which they were excluded society, and confined in a prison! We were unarmed and unattended, and were entirely at their mercy; yet we trusted in God and the rectitude of our intentions, and we commenced our work like men who had to encounter a strong and fierce enemy.

[To be continued.]

SABBATH SCHOOL MONTHLY CONCERT.

At the last meeting of the Board of the American Sunday School Union, the resolutions passed by the Association of teachers in relation to a Monthly Concert of Prayer were brought before them, when the following Resolution was unanimously adopted, viz :

"Resolved, That the Board of Managers of the American Sunday School Union recommend the Second Monday in every month to be observed by the conductors of Sunday schools as a Concert of Prayer."

In recommending the *second Monday* evening in the month, for the Concert of Prayer, the Board were

guided wholly by a desire to adopt that time which, judging from the information before them, would be most agreeable to a majority of the conductors and friends of Sunday schools in the United States.

The first Sunday School Monthly Concert was held in this city on the second Monday of August in the large Lecture Room in Cherry street, and attended by upwards of 500 conductors of Sunday schools and other friends to these institutions. The exercises of the evening, in which the venerable Mr. Eastburn took a part, were appropriate and solemn. A similar meeting was held in the city of New-York on the same evening, and we hope they will soon become general.

The next Concert will be held in the Lecture Room in Cherry, between Fifth and Sixth streets, on Monday evening the 10th inst. at 7½ o'clock. Ministers of the Gospel, Sunday school teachers, and all friendly to these institutions are invited to attend.

It is recommended that teachers whose residence renders it inconvenient for them to attend the meeting in Cherry street, should unite with those of two or three adjacent schools, and hold the Monthly Concert at some convenient place. It is perhaps hardly necessary to remark that the prayers and other exercises at these meetings should have special reference to Sunday schools. We meet to unite our supplications to the throne of grace for a blessing upon the teachers, the scholars, their parents and friends, and to pray the Lord to send forth more labourers into his harvest.

POETRY.

For the American Sunday School Magazine.

A HYMN.

Suitable for children at the opening of a Sunday school.

Psalms 149:6, 148:12,13.

Come, children, and sing to the Lord,
Who brought us from Nature's dark wild;
The praises of God touch a chord,
In the heart of a Sunday school child.

When thoughtless and sinful we strayed,
Surrounded by dangers unknown;
We neither repented, nor prayed;
Ah! where might our wand'rings have gone?

Too mean for the notice of man,
The soul and its value despised;
In circles of folly we ran,
The "foe in our hearts" lay disguised.

But the God of compassions arose,
Commanding the word to be given,
"Deliver the poor from their foes,
And train their young children for heaven."

Then PITY descended to dwell
In hearts that she softened to feel;
They hastened the cloud to dispel,
And Love was attended by Zeal.

The steps of the servants of God,
Now trod the abodes of the poor;
To Heaven they showed us the road,
The Sunday school opened its door.

But chief we admired and adored
The Saviour, who bled, and who died;
And how he gave life, as its Lord,
To the thief that expired at his side.

Our minds have received the true light,
The dews of the Spirit descend;
We learn with Corruption to fight,
And Peace on our steps will attend.

To be lambs of the Saviour's flock,
And housed with his fold in the sky,
Our hope resting firm on the Rock,
Oh! should not our praises be high!

New-York, August, 1824.

B.

Notices and Acknowledgments.

OBITUARY.—It is with the deepest sorrow for the loss which the American Sunday School Union,—and the community generally,—have sustained, that we record the death of one of its Vice-Presidents, **DIVIE BETHUNE**, Esq. merchant of New-York. The death of this excellent man took place on Saturday the 18th of September, in the 53rd year of his age. We shall endeavour in some future number to give a more particular obituary notice of this early, and constant friend of Sunday Schools. In this number will be found a few verses from his pen, written but a few weeks before his death.

General La Fayette.—"Welcome La Fayette!" vibrates upon the ear with every passing gale; no heart is cold, no tongue is silent when the "*Friend of Washington*" becomes the "**NATION'S GUEST**." We most cordially unite in the general expressions of joy which mark a nation's gratitude to the patriot of two hemispheres; and we exceedingly regret that any thing should have occurred to mar the general joy which the Hero's visit to this country has inspired; but the arrangements of some of our fellow citizens to do him honour, have been such as to disgrace themselves, and dishonour God. We allude to the shameful violation of the Sabbath, in many places, by those who have broken its holy rest in preparing to receive and entertain our distinguished visitor.

We shall not attempt to describe the manner in which he has been received; that belongs to other presses; and they have not been backward in furnishing ample details; but one most interesting mark of respect has been shown him, which we most cheerfully notice. It is, that the *children* of Catskill, New-York, have contributed *one hundred and fifty dollars* to the American Bible Society, to constitute **LA FAYETTE** a Life Director of that institution!—Will not the children of Philadelphia constitute him a life member of the American Sunday School Union?

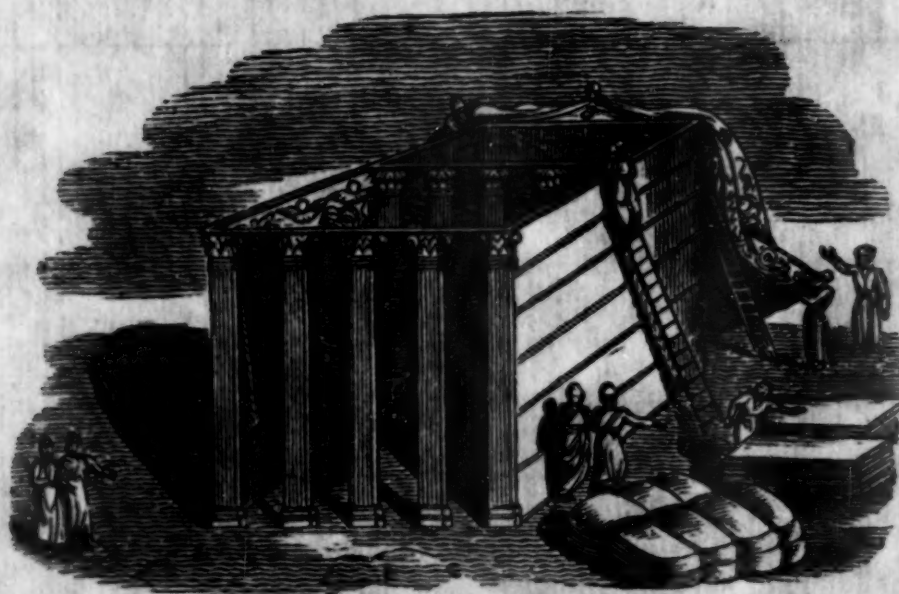
The article on the duties of Managers, District Committees, &c. referred to in our last number, page 76, is unavoidably deferred.

"Fanny" is received.

SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATIONS.



THE TABERNACLE IN THE WILDERNESS.



THE TABERNACLE.

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